

### Free Time

Got to cultivate  
it carefully  
make it pay  
while it lasts.  
Waste is the  
grey reaper  
of middle age.

### Leftover Rose

This gnarled old rose  
(don't know its variety)  
keeps offering itself.  
It's stuck under eaves  
against stucco wall  
covered by broad reach  
of silver maple, ignored.  
Yet each year it  
sends up green  
top heavy shoots  
stretching out for  
light & blooms  
exquisite white.

### Stiffen Up

This job's taken  
starch outa me.  
I'm soft as warm  
chewed gum &  
just as tasteless.  
Aura, if I got one  
is piss yellow.  
Gotta break loose  
stiffen up brace  
myself for  
rebirth.